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Church in the Colonies.

No. 31.

1637

S. P. A. AUSTRALIA.

DIOCESE OF MELBOURNE.

A LETTER

FROM THE

LORD BISHOP OF MELBOURNE,

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE
SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL
IN FOREIGN PARTS.

DATED SEPTEMBER 1854.

LONDON :

PRINTED FOR

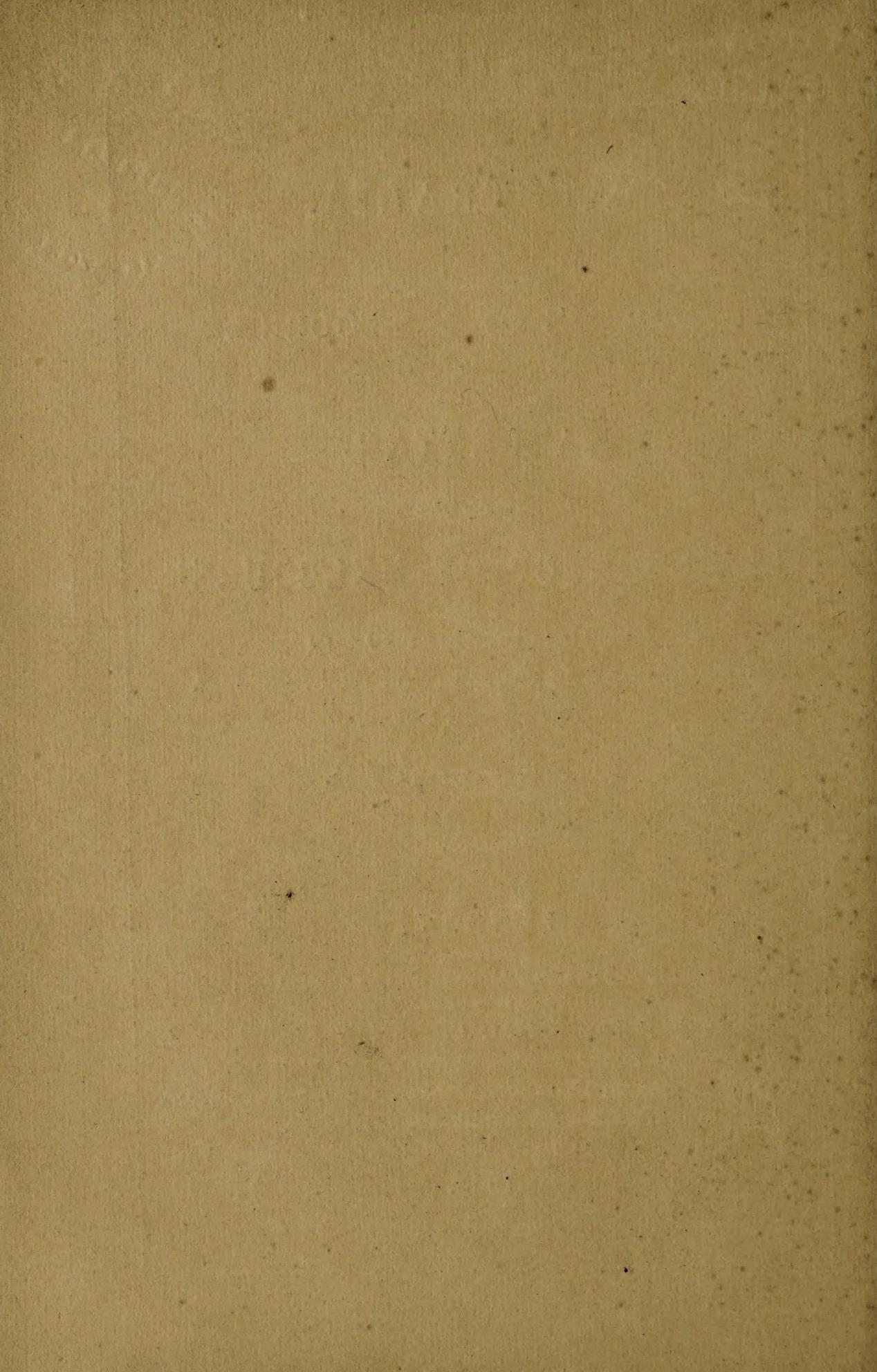
THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL;

AND SOLD BY THE

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE,
GREAT QUEEN STREET, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS;
4, ROYAL EXCHANGE; 16, HANOVER STREET, HANOVER SQUARE; AND
RIVINGTONS, BELL & DALDY, HATCHARDS,
AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1855.

Price Fourpence



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1855.

LONDON :
R. CLAY, PRINTER, BREAD STREET HILL.

Diocese of Melbourne.

MELBOURNE, VICTORIA,

Sept. 1, 1854.

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE often had occasion to apologise for my apparent neglect in not writing to you regularly and fully upon the affairs of the Church in this Diocese ; and I fear that my omissions herein have been regarded by some persons as indicating a want of due regard, or, I may perhaps say, due respect, for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. I would beg, however, through you, to assure the Committee and friends of the Society generally, that the brevity and irregularity of my correspondence have not been occasioned by any disposition on my part to depreciate the importance of the Society's labours, or by any defect in affection or esteem towards those by whom its affairs are ministered. The real and only causes have been my own natural want of facility in writing, and extreme dislike to treat a subject imperfectly, together with the large and increasing amount of local business, and a state of health, which, although sufficiently good to enable me to perform my ordinary duties without much difficulty, does not allow me to attempt more than a limited amount of daily work.

It has been my wish for several years past to prepare an account of the progress of the Church

in this Diocese, which, if I could execute the task properly, would be not only interesting to all whose attention has been directed to the religious condition of our Colonies, but likewise useful to such as may hereafter be called either to labour themselves, or to send forth others to labour, in any similar sphere. The causes above-mentioned have, however, hitherto prevented me, and, although I am far from alleging them as a complete justification, I hope they may be received by my brethren, judging in the spirit of Christian charity, as an excuse for my delay.

I will now apply myself, as the Lord shall give me time and strength, to the accomplishment of my proposed undertaking in the present, and probably one or more future letters, which I would request the Society, if it should deem expedient, to publish entire.

I would first give a brief sketch of the history of the Church in the Diocese since my arrival in January 1848, which will show the ministerial arrangements which I have adopted, and the means which I have used, for obtaining a recognised Ecclesiastical constitution, as also the measure of success which the Lord has granted unto me.

It must always be one chief object of a colonial Bishop, and particularly in a new Diocese like this, the population of which is increasing by tens of thousands annually, to provide a constant supply of additional Clergymen, and at the same time to take care, that those whom he appoints to any ministerial charge shall be faithful and efficient servants of the

Lord. At my arrival there were only three Clergymen of the Church of England employed in the duties of their sacred calling. Three accompanied me from England; one in the course of the same year joined me here, and I ordained four; so that at the end of the year 1848, the number was increased to 11

At the end of 1849 the number was 16

„	1850	„	20
„	1851	„	24
„	1852	„	24
„	1853	„	30

At the time I am writing, Sept. 1, 1854, it is 34.

There are also two additional Clergymen known by me to be on their way from England; I am expecting one from Van Diemen's Land; and there are three candidates for Orders, whom I hope to be able to ordain in the course of the present month.

In perusing the above statement you cannot fail to be struck with there being no increase in the year 1852. This was occasioned by the death, or removal on account of failure of health, or other causes, of no less than six licensed Clergymen of the Diocese in that year. Nor does this statement fully represent our loss: for, within the preceding five months, we had lost three others. The circumstance occasioned me very great mortification, for I was thereby not only prevented from extending the ministration of the Word and Sacraments to various districts in which they were both urgently needed and earnestly desired, but also compelled, in several cases, to disappoint expectations which I had myself

raised, and in some even to relinquish posts which the Church had previously occupied. Moreover, it was just at this time that the gold-fields were discovered, and the Colony, which was before rapidly advancing in population and wealth, rose at once into a position, which, under ordinary circumstances, it could not have attained in less than half a century. Within twelve months the population was estimated to have more than doubled itself ; and the wealth of the people was augmented in a much larger proportion. Nevertheless, I would acknowledge the Lord's continued goodness to us, as shown in a variety of circumstances, which I cannot now enumerate, but which then assured me that He was chastening us “for our profit,” and that He would not withdraw His loving-kindness from us. Accordingly you will observe, that in the course of the following year, 1853, He graciously increased the number of my fellow-labourers to thirty-one ; and I hope that, before the close of the present year, it will exceed forty.

The real condition of a Church depends, however, not merely upon the number, but still more upon the faithfulness, ability, and earnest persevering diligence of its Ministers ; and upon this point I am thankful to be able to testify to the great goodness of the Lord our God towards us. Of course, a body of thirty-five Clergymen must exhibit various degrees of intellectual power and culture, and also of spiritual gifts and Christian devotedness ; but, without pledging myself for every individual, I can say with confidence, that the Clergy of this Diocese are characterised by their soundness of doctrine, their personal piety, and their zealous attention to the duties

of their high and holy calling; and that they are very valuable fellow Helpers to me in the Lord.

To the complaint, which has been sometimes made against me, that I do not admit into my Diocese any Clergyman, however faithful and earnest, who differs from me upon those points on which the Church allows a certain latitude to her members, I would reply by a distinct and positive denial of the fact. I have no desire to narrow the terms of our communion, nor to exclude from ministerial employment, any who can furnish me with satisfactory evidence that their character and conduct in the Ministry has been consistent with their ordination vows; and that they possess the necessary qualifications, physical and intellectual, for the service of their Lord in such a country as this. I believe that several of the Clergy now in this Diocese, whom I highly esteem and love for their works' sake, differ from me, more or less upon Baptismal Regeneration, and other questions, about which there has been so much controversy in the Church: but I trust that they all hold, and all preach, the fundamental truths of the Gospel, which are stated in the sixth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth "Articles of Religion;" and that they do faithfully and earnestly, "instruct the people committed to their charge out of the Scriptures." My commissaries know my sentiments upon this point; and I have no reason to suppose that they have ever acted, or that they would ever be at all inclined to act, at variance with them. I thank them, however, that they have never sent, and I have a good confidence that they

never will send, any one who makes the "kingdom of God" to consist in forms and ceremonies, instead of in "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," or who teaches "for doctrines the commandments of men," or who strives "about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers." From all such may the Lord graciously preserve His Church, both in this Diocese and in our Fatherland ! In connexion with the measure of success which the Lord has bestowed upon us, in providing faithful and able Clergymen for the ministry of the Word and Sacraments, I would mention the progress which He has enabled us to make in portioning out the Diocese, according to the Ecclesiastical system of our Fatherland, into Parishes and Archdeaconries. The maintenance of the Parochial, in contrast with the Congregational system, is, in my opinion, essential to the success of the great object which we ought always to keep in view, of bringing the whole people under effective pastoral superintendence ; and all our Colonial Bishops have, I believe, adopted the practice of dividing their Dioceses, as circumstances permitted, into distinct parishes. There are, however, several causes which have occasioned, in my own case, great delay and difficulty in carrying out this system. Upon my arrival, the three Clergymen then officiating in the Diocese were so far removed from one another, that it was quite impossible, as it was quite unnecessary, to define the limits of their respective ministrations. As, however, their number increased, so that they were brought into closer proximity to each other, I was able to fix the rela-

tive boundaries of a few Parochial Districts, leaving them still indefinite in extent in those directions in which there were no neighbouring Clergymen. These Districts have gradually become multiplied, and now there are in Melbourne some which may be properly termed parishes. But there is another cause, besides the distance which so often separates the Parochial Clergy from one another, viz., the great proportion of young and inexperienced Ministers, which has compelled me, in many instances, to delay the formation of new parishes. For when I am obliged, as often happens, to place a young man in charge of a district which is locally distinct from any other, instead of making it an independent cure, I prefer to regard it as an outlying portion of the nearest parish. Thus at the present time, not only the whole town and suburbs of Geelong, but also all the surrounding country districts, are comprehended in one parish, because the Clergymen appointed to the charge of these districts are young men in deacon's Orders, who have not sufficient experience to be placed in an independent charge. This is an evil which I hope every succeeding year, through their growth in age and spiritual industry, and through the addition of others to the staff, we shall see rapidly diminishing.

Besides the gradual formation of distinct Parishes, each under the charge of its own responsible minister, I have been anxious from the first to divide the Diocese into Archdeaconries, which might be placed under the superintendence of men qualified by their wisdom and experience to exercise

an influence over their brethren, and also by their zeal and activity to promote the extension of the Church in the particular district committed to their oversight. Thus in October, 1848, I constituted the Archdeaconry of Geelong, to which I appointed the Rev. H. B. Macartney, D.D. In November, 1851, I constituted that of Melbourne, and appointed to it the Rev. T. Hart Davies, M.A., who had been designated to this office by my commissaries in England. At the same time, however, the Archdeaconry of Geelong became vacant, through the appointment of Dr. Macartney to the office of Dean of Melbourne, and I had no one whom I could appoint as his successor. The failure of Archdeacon Davies' health also compelled him, in the course of the following year, to return to England, and thus his office also became vacant, and in 1852 I was again left, as at the first, without an Archdeacon. I mention the circumstance as showing the great vicissitudes, and peculiar difficulties consequent upon them, to which a Colonial Bishop, especially in a newly formed Diocese, is exposed. I am thankful to be able to add, that I have this year appointed the Rev. T. C. B. Stretch to the Archdeaconry of Geelong, and have also constituted an Archdeaconry of Portland, to which I have appointed the Rev. T. H. Braim, Minister of Belfast. The Archdeaconry of Melbourne, however, still continues vacant.

The office of Archdeacon in a new Colonial Diocese is one of very great practical importance, for his duty is to keep a constant oversight of the

district under his jurisdiction ; to obtain information concerning, and if possible, personally inspect any new villages which are forming ; to observe the enlargement which is taking place in the towns ; to ascertain where Churches or Schools are wanted, and where additional Clergymen or Lay-readers should be placed ; and to suggest to the Bishop, or the people, as the case may be, such steps as may be necessary for carrying out his plans of Church extension. It is therefore a cause of much thankfulness, that both Mr. Stretch and Dr. Braim are men in whose singleness of purpose, energy and judgment, I can place entire confidence ; but I am disappointed, that I have not yet been able to obtain such a one as is required for the Archdeaconry of Melbourne. I am also very desirous to constitute an Archdeaconry for a portion of the interior, to comprehend the principal gold-fields ; but I have not yet determined from what place he should derive his title. If the Lord should provide a person qualified for the office, I would at once make the necessary arrangements ; but until I can obtain the man, it is of no use to take any steps in the matter.

The subjoined tabular statement, showing the counties, towns, and villages, with resident ministers, parishes, and clergymen, in the several Archdeaconries, conveys to those who have the opportunity of consulting the map recently published by Arrowsmith, or any other good map of Victoria, a much clearer idea of the ministerial arrangements of the Diocese, than any description which I could give of them.

TABLE I.

TABLE II.

ARCHDEACONRIES.	COUNTIES.	TOWNS OR DISTRICTS WHERE CLERGYMEN ARE SITUATED.	PARISHES.	INCUMBENTS OR CURATES.
GEELONG.		Geelong	Christ Church, a new parish (St. Paul's) is about to be formed imme- diately.	Ven. T. C. B. Stretch, Archdeacon, Incumbent. Rev. John Potter, Curate. Rev. G. O. Vance, Curate. Rev. J. C. T. Stretch, officiating in a school- room in the suburbs.
Constituted Oct. 24, 1848, Extended March 15, 1854.	GRANT, POLWORTH, GRENVILLE, and TALBOT.	Point Henry Barrabool Hills Winchelsea on the Bar- won Ballaarat Castlemaine		Rev. Geo. Pollard, Curate of the Archdeacon of Geelong. Rev. W. R. Croxton, ditto, ditto.
Archdeacon, Ven. T. C. B. Stretch, Appointed March 15, 1854.				Rev. E. Tanner, not yet licensed. Rev. J. R. Thackeray, Incumbent. Rev. John Cheyne, Incumbent.
NORMANBY, DUNDAS, VILLIERS, RIPON, HAMPTON, and HEYTESBURY.		Portland Belfast		Rev. James Y. Wilson, Incumbent.
PORTLAND.		Warrambool Wannon River		Ven. T. H. Braim, Archdeacon of Portland, Incumbent.
Constituted Mar. 20, 1854. Archdeacon, Ven. T. H. Braim, Appointed March 20, 1854.		Tarrawile, Gippsland Sandhurst, Bendigo		Rev. P. T. Beamish, Incumbent. Rev. F. C. T. Russell, Incumbent.
Archidiaconal Extra.	Counties unnamed.			Rev. W. Bean, Incumbent. Rev. J. H. Gregory, Incumbent.

I may add, that I have constituted a Dean and Chapter of four Canons for the Cathedral Church of St. James; but, as yet, I have appointed only a Dean—not having made up my mind as to the precise duties which the Canons ought to perform, and not being willing to make the office merely honorary.

The next particular to which I would direct attention in the history of our Church during the last six years, is the progress of its buildings. On my arrival there were only two unfinished Churches, (St. James's and St. Peter's,) in Melbourne, a small neat Church at Geelong, a small weatherboard Church at Belfast, and a School-room used for public worship at Portland. There was no Parsonage at Melbourne; but there was one at Geelong, and one at Portland, both substantial brick buildings. There was also a neat brick school-building at Geelong, and that already alluded to, which was also of brick, at Portland. At Melbourne there was nothing but a miserable weatherboard building. Since that time, the number and the character of the Churches, Parsonages and Schools, which have been erected, although far from adequate to the wants of our rapidly increasing population, have been such as to indicate no small measure of zeal and liberality on the part of the people. I am afraid of being tedious, if I give you a detailed account of all these buildings; and yet I know not how otherwise to convey a correct idea of the growth of the Church. Perhaps I shall best effect my object by describing our condition in this particular at the

discovery of the gold-fields in October 1851, and our condition at the present time. You must, however, remember, that I can only enumerate principal buildings, and that I must omit some Schools, which have been erected in the interior, and in the suburbs of Melbourne and Geelong, and which are either regularly, or occasionally, used for Divine service on the Lord's-day.

In *Melbourne*, at the discovery of the gold-fields in 1851, there were the Churches of St. James and St. Peter, capable of holding about 450 and 700 respectively—the former being still unfinished. St. Paul's Church also was in progress, but not ready for Divine service. St. Peter's Parsonage was erected and occupied. A large portion of a building for Boys', Girls' and Infants' Schools, with class-rooms attached, had been erected in connexion with St. James's Church; and two other substantial school-buildings, one for boys and girls, and the other girls and infants, to each of which the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge contributed 300*l.*, had also been completed. A Grammar-school had likewise been built, chiefly with money granted by the same society.

In *Collingwood*, a School building for boys and girls had been erected, which was used on Sundays for public worship.

At *Richmond*, a Church, for which we were mainly indebted to the kind exertions of Sir T. B. Blomefield, and the liberality of an excellent lady, since dead (Mrs. Beecher), was so far completed as to be

opened for service—a School being held in it during the week.

At *St. Kilda*, two miles from Melbourne, on the bay, there was a substantial School-room, in which service was performed.

At *Brighton*, seven miles from Melbourne, also on the bay, there was a small ill-built brick Church.

At *Williamstown*, nine miles from Melbourne, off which all the shipping then lay, a building, not belonging to the Church, was used for a School, and for public worship.

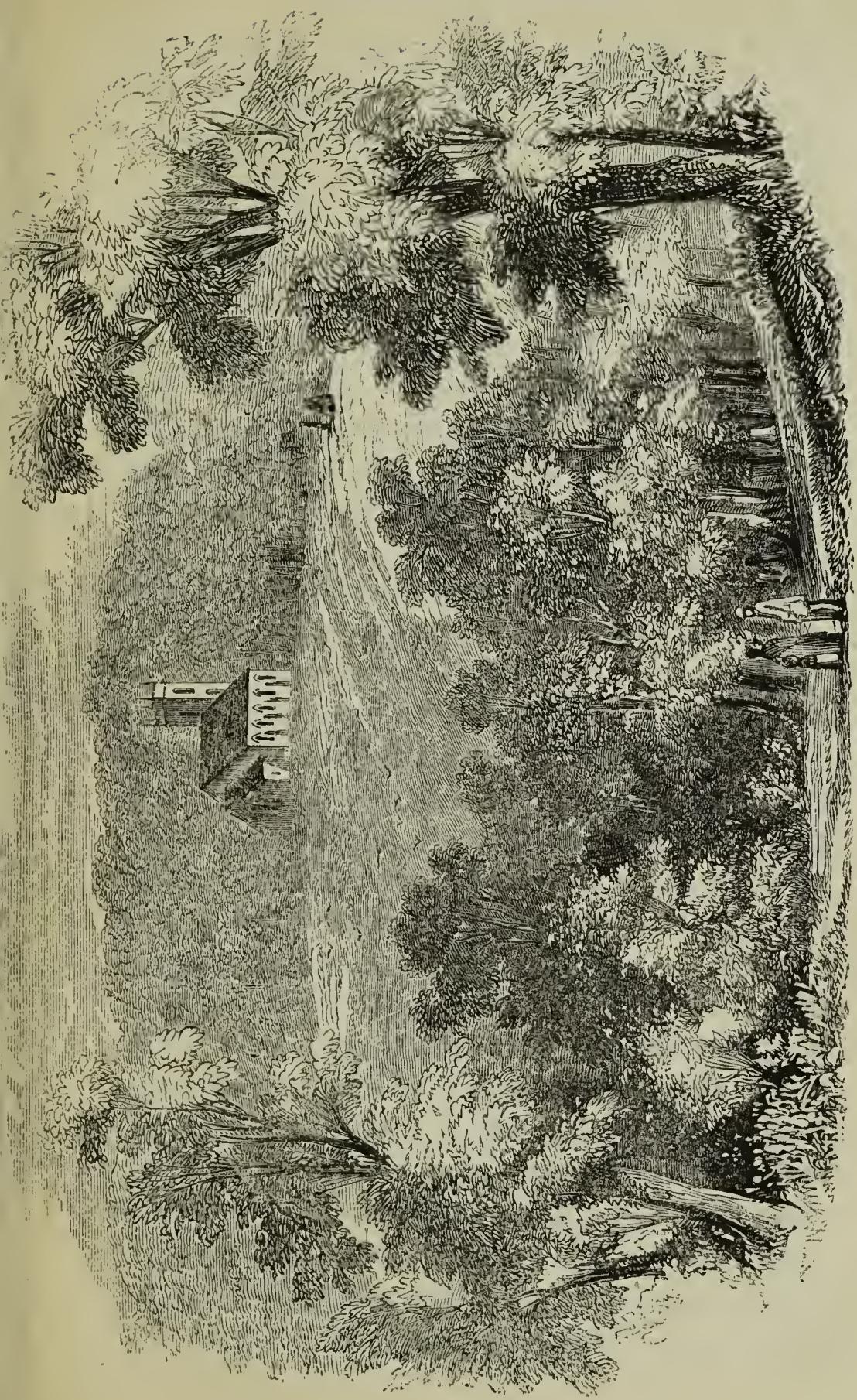
At *Heidelberg*, seven miles from Melbourne, a small neat Church had been built, and opened for service, but was yet in an unfinished state.

At *Pentridge*, five miles from Melbourne, a small portion of a Church had been erected, which was also used as a School-room.

At *Kilmore*, a township about forty-five miles from Melbourne, in an agricultural district, there was a School-room with a dwelling-house attached to it, the former of which was used on Sundays for divine service, and the latter was occupied as a Parsonage.

At *Ballan*, a township in the bush, a Parsonage-house had been erected.

At *Ceilong*, on the other side of the bay, a projected enlargement of the existing Church had been commenced, and the walls of a second Church, intended to hold nearly 1,000 persons, were completed, but it was not roofed in. An addition had also been made to the original School-room, and two other



HEIDELBERG CHURCH.

School buildings in the suburbs of the town had been erected. There was, likewise, a good-sized substantial Parsonage in connexion with the second Church.

At *Belfast*, the little weather-board Church had been enlarged, and a stone Parsonage erected.

At *Portland*, the School-room had been fitted up for public worship, but nothing more had been done.

At the port in *Gippsland*, a cottage had been purchased for the residence of the Clergyman.

The above-mentioned were, I think, all the Church buildings of any importance in the Colony at that time.

When the gold-fields were discovered, at first the impossibility of obtaining labour, and subsequently the high prices, put a stop to every work which was in progress, and compelled us to defer, apparently for an indefinite period, the commencement of such as had been in contemplation ; so that, while immigrants poured in by thousands monthly, there seemed no hope of providing any additional accommodation for the people to assemble themselves together for public worship. It was at this time that, at the suggestion of some of the most earnest and judicious members of our Church, I determined to try and obtain a supply of iron churches from England, respecting which I may say more presently. GOD, however, was graciously pleased to order the result of the working of the gold-fields, in relation to Church buildings, quite contrary to all human expectation. For the passing of an Act of Council in the beginning of last year, whereby there

has been set apart annually 30,000*l.*, of which the Church of England receives more than half, towards the erection of places of worship, and Ministers' dwellings, and towards the payment of Ministers' stipends, gave an impulse to voluntary contributions, which, together with the great wealth that had been acquired by some liberal-minded men, has produced effects, such as, I think, no one could have anticipated. The following statement of our present condition will enable you to form some idea of what has been accomplished ; but I regret that I am unable always to mention the sum which has been expended upon each particular work, and therefore cannot in all cases do full justice to the energy and liberality of those by whom they have severally been undertaken.

In *Melbourne*, St. James's Church has been completed and consecrated. St. Peter's Church has been repaired and enlarged, so as to afford double the accommodation that it formerly did, at a cost of upwards of 10,000*l.* St. Paul's Church has been completed, so far as the accommodation for a congregation is concerned, and the tower is now in progress. It holds 1,040 persons ; and, when finished, will be a very handsome edifice, and a great ornament to the city. I do not know its estimated cost ; but, although a great portion of the work was executed when labour and materials were comparatively cheap, the amount which will have been expended upon it cannot fall short of, and may I think much exceed, 12,000*l.* Until a Parsonage in connexion with the Church can be erected, a house has been

purchased for the Clergyman's residence. A fourth Church, to be called St. John's, has been commenced, and a portion of it is completed, and opened for Divine service. This portion will contain, I believe, about 500 persons, and has cost upwards of 5,000*l.*

In *Collingwood*, a handsome stone Church is in progress, which will be ready to be opened, if God permit, in the month of November. When completed, it will contain about 1,000 sittings. The estimated cost is, I believe, about 14,000*l.* A very pretty Parsonage of stone has also been erected, at a cost of 2,000*l.*

In *North Melbourne*, which is intended to form St. Mary's Parish, a large, well-built, weatherboard School has been erected, in which Divine service is now conducted on Sundays. It is capable of containing between 400 and 500 persons. The immediate erection of a Parsonage is also contemplated; and in the interim, a gentleman has most liberally lent a house for the use of the Minister, rent free.

In this city also, besides the above-mentioned works, St. James's Schools have been completed by the addition of two wings, the cost of which was, I believe, nearly 4,000*l.*; and a house at the cost of 900*l.* has been erected for the teachers, while, in Collingwood, the original School-room has been appropriated exclusively to girls; a large room, which is used for public worship, until the Church can be opened, has been erected for boys, and a third room added for infants. Both of these latter are good substantial buildings, the former of stone; but I do not know their cost.

At *Richmond* the addition of a gallery to the Church has greatly added to the accommodation; and the building is now closed for a few weeks, with a view to its being completed for consecration. Several thousand pounds have been expended within the last three years upon this edifice. We have also a large weatherboard School building, so that there is no longer any occasion to use the Church for School purposes.

I may here digress for a few moments to remark, that this was probably the Church, the desecration of which, by applying it to such a use, was complained of by some one to a friend in England. Whoever made the complaint, seems to have forgotten, that in a new colony, where both Churches and School-rooms are wanted at the same time, and both cannot be proceeded with together, it is necessary, either to build a School-room, which may be used for a place of worship, as has been frequently done here, or to build a Church, which, until finished and consecrated, may be used as a School-room, as the people preferred to do at *Richmond*. A reasonable man will see no desecration of holy places in this; but, on the contrary, a perfectly lawful accommodation of ourselves to existing circumstances. At the same time, the feelings of the people, if they are really earnest in Church matters, will make them exert themselves to provide as soon as possible a separate building for each object; and this they have done at *Richmond*. The inference which, I am told, has been drawn from the circumstance of there having been, up to Easter of last year, no Church

consecrated in my Diocese, that I was indifferent about the ceremony of consecration, implies such an ignorance of the circumstances of the Colony, as ought to have prevented any one from forming, or at least, publicly affirming it. The simple fact is, that no Churches were ready for consecration, except St. Peter's, Melbourne, upon which there was a considerable debt, and Christ-church, Geelong, respecting which there was first a delay on account of the land not having been conveyed to the trustees, and afterwards a postponement of the ceremony until the contemplated enlargement was completed.

But to return from this digression.

At *St. Kilda*, the School-room has been enlarged to twice its former size, and will now accommodate on Sundays about 400 worshippers. A Parsonage has also been erected, at a cost, I believe, of nearly 3,000*l.* The building of a Church, for which a plan was prepared, and tenders received last year, has been hitherto delayed, in consequence of the amount of the tenders so greatly exceeding the estimated cost, as to deter the trustees from undertaking the responsibility; but it is now about to be commenced, and a portion of the structure, which will afford accommodation to about 600 or 700 persons, and which it is expected may be executed for a sum not exceeding 8,000*l.*, will, I trust, be completed in the course of a few months.

At *Brighton*, from various causes, no addition worthy of notice has been made to the Church; nor has any Parsonage, or School building, been erected. The people are, however, anxious upon the subject,

and the funds will, I doubt not, be forthcoming as soon as it can be decided what to do. At present, the great difficulty is, to come to a satisfactory decision on this point. In the outlying hamlets of the Parish, however, two School-rooms have been erected, which are used for Divine service.

At *Prahran*, which is now a populous suburb of Melbourne, and where the want of the ministrations of our Church has long been very painfully felt, there was opened last month for public worship a School building of a very superior character, capable of accommodating upwards of 600 persons. It has been erected at a cost of nearly 5,000*l.*, chiefly through the liberality and indefatigable energy of one individual, whose ever ready help encouraged the exertions of the Clergyman, while his example provoked the emulation of his lay brethren.

At *Hawthorne*, a rising village in a populous district beyond Richmond, a Church and Parsonage are almost completed; and I hope that the former will be opened, and the latter occupied, within two or three weeks from the present time. Both these buildings are well designed, and executed in stone.

At *Williamstown*, after much disappointment and delay, the iron Church and Parsonage, for the manufacture of which 1,300*l.*, was granted as a loan by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, are now erected. And towards the end of the present, or in the beginning of next month, if no unforeseen delay occur, the former will be ready for consecration.

I am looking forward with much interest and more anxiety to the result of this first experiment;

for by it will probably be decided the question, whether or not three other Churches and Parsonages, which have either already arrived, or are on their way from England, will be available for the purpose for which they have been sent out. There is a great prejudice against them among the people here, and those for whom they were originally designed, have preferred to erect edifices of stone, or brick,—in one case, in the worst architectural taste, and in all at a greatly disproportioned expense,—rather than accept of them. This has been to me a great disappointment; and my mortification has been increased by the delay and difficulty which we have experienced in erecting the first Church and Parsonage at Williamstown, in consequence of the buildings being sent out in two different ships, and without a plan of either of them. I have, however, a strong confidence in the wise and good providence of GOD; and while I regard the result as intended to caution me against again acting as a merchant, even in my public character, I can not only comfort myself with the reflection, that the very prejudice I have spoken of has been useful in stimulating many to those exertions by which structures of a superior character have been erected, but I can also still cherish the hope that these buildings will themselves at last prove very serviceable. I am the more encouraged to expect this, from the circumstance, that after the trustees had actually refused to accept those which were designed for Williamstown, on account of the state in which they were landed, and I had quite despaired of being able to erect them, I am now

permitted to see them, both Church and Parsonage, substantially completed; so that the suitability of each, and especially that of the Church, for the climate and circumstances of the Colony, will at least be fairly tested.

I have already mentioned that at Geelong, when the gold-fields were first discovered, the enlargement of Christ-church, and the erection of a second Church (St. Paul's), had both been commenced; but the unfinished works, which continued for more than eighteen months to attract the attention of all who visited the town, excited in every attached member of the Church, a mingled feeling of grief and shame. Now, however, that feeling has been exchanged for one of thankfulness and joy; for through the energy and good confidence of the trustees, aided by the influence of Mr. Stretch, the present Archdeacon, and the liberal cooperation of the people, both buildings are so far completed, as to be fit for Divine service; and many hundreds, who before were unable to obtain admission to the house of GOD, can now assemble themselves with the congregation every Lord's-day, to worship Him in the familiar language of our beautiful Liturgy.

One of the School-rooms before alluded to, in the suburbs of the town, has also been doubled in size; and measures are taking for the erection of a building for public worship (probably a School-room) in another populous suburban district. Moreover, through the exertions of the present, following upon those of the late Archdeacon, services have been established, and School buildings in which they are

conducted, have been erected in various places, for the benefit of the agricultural population settled in the neighbourhood of Geelong, but I cannot now describe these particularly.

I have omitted to mention the erection of Parsonages at Heidelberg and Pentridge, both very costly, but neither of them well designed or executed; and also the building of a very neat School-room in the latter parish, between two and three miles from the Parish Church, where the Clergyman, the Rev. G. Goodman, holds a service every alternate Sunday afternoon.

Besides those in the towns or neighbourhood of Melbourne and Geelong, the only Church buildings of importance are a Church and Parsonage at Castlemaine, the centre of the original Mount Alexander gold-fields. The former is not advanced much beyond the foundations, but the latter is, I hope, now occupied by the Rev. J. Cheyne. I greatly rejoice at this, the first permanent Church building on any gold-field; for it was not only required for the comfort of Mr. and Mrs. Cheyne and their large family, but it will, I hope, stimulate the people upon the other gold-fields to follow the example of their brethren at Castlemaine.

At Ballaarat a weatherboard building is now erecting for the Clergyman, and a subscription for a Church, has been opened. The energetic character of the Rev. Mr. Thackeray, who has recently entered upon the charge of that important gold-field, affords me a good confidence that the work will not be unnecessarily delayed.

Although the buildings have not yet been commenced, subscriptions for a Church at Portland, a new Church at Belfast, and a Church and Parsonage at Warnambool, have been set on foot, and considerable sums collected and promised. At Belfast likewise, the existing weatherboard Church has been again added to, as a temporary measure, until the proposed stone fabric shall be ready for service.

If you have had the patience to read, or even to glance over, the above statement, you will feel, I think, that we have much reason to thank GOD for what he has done for us, and to look forward with an humble confidence that he will continue to provide for His people, and to bless His servants in their work. In recalling my own feelings two years ago, when the number of our Clergy seemed likely to diminish rather than to increase,—when almost all of them were extremely straitened in their circumstances, and some could scarcely provide the commonest necessaries of life for their families,—when every building was at a stand still, and it seemed altogether impossible to raise the money required to carry on those Churches which were already half finished, much more to commence new ones in any of those places for which they were so greatly needed ;—I am disposed to exclaim with the Psalmist, “ Truly GOD is good to Israel. . . . But as for me, my feet were almost gone ; my steps had well nigh slipped.” He has indeed rebuked our unbelieving fears, and made us to be ashamed of our doubts concerning His care for His Church. May He cause us always “ to draw near ” to Him, and to put

our trust in Him ; that He may glorify Himself in us, and that we may go forth to our work day by day with a quiet assurance of His presence and blessing on it.

The manner in which the Clergy have been maintained during these six and a-half years, next claims our attention. Of the three whom I found here, one received a stipend of 200*l.*, and the other two stipends of 150*l.* each, exclusive of their income from fees and other sources, from the Colonial Treasury of New South Wales, of which the country now constituting the Colony of Victoria was then a district ; but, in consequence of the whole amount available for Church of England purposes having been already appropriated before my arrival, I was not able to obtain assistance towards the support of any of those who came with me, or afterwards joined me, from this source. We were, therefore, dependent entirely upon local contributions, and upon the aid of our brethren in England ; and during the years 1848, 1849, and 1850, the Parochial Clergy were chiefly maintained out of the special fund for this Diocese, raised under the auspices of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, aided by an annual sum of 150*l.*, (part of a grant made by the same Society some time previously towards the maintenance of one or more Clergymen beyond the settled districts,) which had been appropriated by the Bishop of Sydney, then Bishop of Australia, to the Clergyman at Portland ; but to which, when his parish was limited to the town and its vicinity, he was no longer entitled ; by an annual grant of vari-

able amount, which we received from the Colonial Church and School Society, and by the subscriptions of the people in the different parishes. At the end of 1850, the English fund being almost exhausted, I became very anxious upon the subject ; but providentially a large sum, collected by Sir T. B. Blomefield, relieved me from my difficulties ; and, in the following year, the separation of Port Phillip from New South Wales placed at our disposal from the Colonial Treasury, for Church building and stipends of Clergymen, including my own stipend of 500*l.*, an annual sum of about 3,000*l.*, which was likewise a most seasonable assistance.

In the same year, 1851, the conference of Clergy and lay representatives of the several Parishes and Ecclesiastical Districts, whom I had called together to consult upon Church matters, established the "Annual Stipend Board of the United Church of England and Ireland, in the Colony of Victoria," with the object of raising, by voluntary contributions, a general fund, out of which all deficiencies in local contributions might be made up, and thus a certain stipend secured to every Clergyman. By means of this Board, which raised in the course of the year 1852 the large amount of 1,652*l.* 12*s.*, (chiefly in the parishes of St. James and St. Peter, in this city,) and by local subscriptions for individual Parochial Ministers, with the money from the Colonial Treasury, we were able during that year, without any assistance from my English fund, and with only the above-mentioned grant of 150*l.* and another of 100*l.*, to the Rev. J.

Sullivan, from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and a grant from the Colonial Church and School Society, to provide stipends varying from 200*l.* to 300*l.* for all the clergy.

Of course some of them had much larger incomes accruing to them from other sources ; but no one of them received less than 200*l.*, which, in the then cheap times of the Colony, would have been amply sufficient to procure them necessaries and common comforts, with which, according to the Apostle's admonition to Timothy, the ministers of the Lord ought to be content. The discovery of gold, however, in the latter part of the preceding year, and the consequent rise in prices and difficulty of obtaining household servants, had already produced a great change in this respect, and hence many of my brethren who were husbands and fathers, had to endure themselves, and saw their wives and children compelled to endure, many hardships, and to suffer many privations. It was indeed a very trying period, and I do not know how we should have been able to provide, in the next year, the increase of income required to meet the increased expenditure, if we had been left to depend upon voluntary contributions. I am, therefore, bound to acknowledge with thankfulness, that the Act of Council, passed in January 1853, although I could not then, and cannot now, approve of the principle upon which it is founded, conferred upon us very opportune assistance : for it practically secured to every Clergyman, holding an independent cure, an income of not less than 450*l.*, and thus relieved both me and them from any anxiety as to that matter for

the ensuing twelve months. In consequence of the provision thus unexpectedly made for us, we used no means during that year to replenish our almost exhausted Stipend Fund ; neither did we draw the sum of 150*l.*, mentioned above, as granted by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, for Clergymen beyond the settled districts ; nor expend the further sum of 500*l.*, which had been most kindly voted to us as an annual grant for five years by the same Society. The only help which we received from England was from the Colonial Church and School Society, and their grant was expended chiefly in the maintenance of Lay-readers.

A considerable sum remains in my books to the credit of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel ; and, although the increased number of Clergy has now exhausted the amount of the grant by the legislature, and we have been obliged to avail ourselves of a balance of between 500*l.* and 600*l.*, which yet remained unexpended in the hands of the Treasurer of the Annual Stipend Fund, still I hope that we shall be able to keep this untouched to the end of the year. We may probably, however, require the before-mentioned sum of 150*l.*, in order to make up the incomes of one or two Clergymen on the gold-fields. The Rev. J. Thackeray, minister of Ballarat, has already received 100*l.* out of the grant from the Colonial Church and School Society ; and I think we shall have to divide this grant of the Society, for the Propagation of the Gospel between the Rev. J. Cheyne and the Rev. J. H. Gregory. I would take this opportunity of expressing my hope that the

Committee will allow the other grant, that of 500*l.* annually for five years, to stand over, in order that I may apply for it if any emergency should arise: for I feel that, at any time, a change may suddenly occur in the circumstances either of the Colony, or of the Church, which may place us in a position of extreme pecuniary embarrassment. They may, however, be assured, that I will not make any demand upon them, unless there should be an absolute necessity for me to do so.

You may desire to know what are our financial prospects for the future. As I have already mentioned, the annual amount available for the stipends of the Clergy out of the Colonial Treasury has been this year already exhausted; and, as I am now expecting several additional Clergymen, the deficiency will be considerably greater for the next year. Hence, in order that the incomes may be kept up, as they ought to be, to the present standard, a large sum must be again raised by private contributions. In the case of most of our parochial ministers, I do not anticipate much difficulty: for those who attend the services of their Church appear in general sensible of the great desirableness, for their own sake, of procuring to the Clergy in the Colony the same rank in society which they hold in England; and of the necessity, for this purpose, of providing for them sufficient incomes. But for some who have the charge of districts where the people are comparatively poor, or where there is, as will sometimes happen, a total want of Christian liberality, it will not be so easy to make a due provision; for there

is a strong local feeling prevalent among the people ; and they very commonly consider, that if they provide for their own Minister, they do all that can be expected of them, and are in no wise bound to make up the short-comings of their neighbours. To overcome this feeling, and to secure such a maintenance for all the Clergy as shall enable them to preserve their independence and respectability, is the object for which, as I have mentioned above, the Annual Stipend Fund was originally established ; and upon our success in maintaining this fund, the attainment of that object will chiefly depend. By a resolution of the recent conference, the former Annual Stipend Board was dissolved, and a new Board, somewhat differently constituted, was formed for the management of this fund and the Church Endowment Fund. The Stipend Fund is, however, still kept perfectly distinct ; and I have every reason to hope that the new Board will adopt energetic and systematic efforts for procuring general contributions to it. How far these efforts will succeed, cannot yet be known. The issue of them is with the Lord, who disposeth the hearts of men according to His own will : but, whatever measure of success He may grant us in this particular, we are assured that if we serve Him faithfully in the station in which He has placed us, and rely upon His promises, He will not suffer us to want any good thing. We need not, therefore, take any anxious care for the future. It is enough to know that He careth for us.

I will conclude this account of the ministerial arrangements of the Diocese with an enumeration

of the places for which Clergymen are now chiefly needed. They are the following,—

1. The Parish of Christ-church, Geelong, which Archdeacon Stretch will resign as soon as I am able to form a separate Parish in connexion with St. Paul's Church.
2. The District of Hawthorne, in the vicinity of Melbourne, where a Church and Parsonage have been already built.
3. The Districts of Emerald Hill and Sandridge, adjacent suburbs of Melbourne, on the south side of the Yarra, which might be placed under the charge of the same Minister.
4. Another suburban District of Melbourne, upon the same side of the Yarra, towards Prahran.
5. A third suburban District of Melbourne, towards the east, called the Collingwood Flat.
6. A fourth suburban District of Melbourne, towards the north, where St. Mary's School has been built.
7. The bush Parish of Ballan, which is vacant.
8. The District of Bacchus' Marsh, where there is an agricultural population.
9. The bush District of Benalla.
10. The bush District of Wangaratta, on the Ovens.
11. The bush District of Hamilton, or the Grange to the westward; and
12. The agricultural District of Tower Hill, in the neighbourhood of Belfast.

Besides these, there are various gold-fields of more or less importance, for which I am most

anxious to obtain the ministrations of the Church. I am afraid to name the number of Clergymen wanted for these; but I would say, that if they were men of the right stamp, faithful, earnest, active, self-denying, and cheerful, we could scarcely have too many.

I would add also, that Curates are greatly needed for several Parishes in Melbourne and elsewhere. To supply these wants, we have one Clergyman just arrived from England, and who has not received any appointment; and one now officiating as Curate at Geelong, who will be at liberty when the Parish is divided.

The history of our proceedings, with the object of obtaining a legal constitution for the Church in Victoria, I shall reserve for another letter, which I hope, if GOD permit, to prepare immediately.

In reading over this, I cannot help feeling that I have used a great deal of paper to very little purpose; but I would ask you, and any of my brethren in England who may peruse this, kindly to excuse any signs which it may exhibit of hurried composition; remembering that I am able to command a very small portion of my time, and am, as I have already mentioned, very slow in the use of my pen. Yet more earnestly would I ask both you and them, to make their supplications unto the throne of grace for myself and brethren, and for that portion of the Lord's vineyard in which He has appointed us to labour; that, if I may without presumption so apply the language of the Apostle, "for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of

many persons, thanks may be given by many on our behalf."

Please to present my respectful Christian regards to the President, Vice-Presidents, and standing Committee, of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel; and believe me to remain,

My dear Sir,

Your faithful brother in the Lord,

C. MELBOURNE.

The Rev. ERNEST HAWKINS,
Secretary of the S. P. G.

THE END.

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